

# Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission Report September 2015

## CHAPTER 8.14.

### INFECTION WITH RIFT VALLEY FEVER VIRUS

#### Article 8.14.1.

##### General provisions

- 1) The aim of this chapter is to mitigate the animal and public health risks posed by Rift Valley fever (RVF) and to prevent its international spread.
- 2) Humans and many animal species are susceptible to *infection*. For the purpose of the *Terrestrial Code*, RVF is defined as an *infection* of ruminants with Rift Valley fever virus (RVFV).
- 3) The following defines the occurrence of ~~RVFV~~ *infection with RVFV*:
  - a) RVFV, excluding vaccine strains, has been isolated and identified as such from a sample from a ruminant; or
  - b) antigen or ribonucleic acid specific to RVFV, excluding vaccine strains, has been identified in a sample from a ruminant epidemiologically linked to a confirmed or suspected case of RVF, or giving cause for suspicion of association or contact with RVFV; or
  - c) antibodies to RVFV antigens which are not the consequence of *vaccination*, have been identified in a sample from a ruminant with either epidemiological links to a confirmed or suspected case of RVF, or giving cause for suspicion of association or contact with RVFV.
- 4) For the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, the *infective period* for RVF shall be 14 days.
- 5) In areas where RVFV is present, epizootics of RVF may occur following favourable climatic, environmental conditions and availability of susceptible host and competent *vector* populations. Epizootics are separated by inter-epizootic periods.
- 6) For the purposes of this chapter:
  - a) 'area' means a part of a country that experiences epizootics and inter-epizootic periods, but which does not correspond to the definition of *zone*;
  - b) 'epizootic of RVF' means the occurrence of *outbreaks* at an incidence substantially exceeding that during an inter-epizootic period;
  - c) 'inter-epizootic period' means the period of variable duration, often long, with intermittent low level of *vector* activity and low rate of virus transmission, which is often not detected;
  - d) ruminants include dromedary camels.
- 7) The historical distribution of RVF has been parts of the African continent, Madagascar, some other Indian Ocean Islands and the south western Arabian Peninsula. However, *vectors*, environmental and climatic factors, land-use dynamics, and animal movements may modify the temporal and spatial distribution of the *infection*.
- 8) When authorising import or transit of the *commodities* covered in the chapter, with the exception of those listed in Article 8.14.2., *Veterinary Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in this chapter relevant to the RVF status of the ruminant population of the *exporting country*.
- 9) Standards for diagnostic tests and vaccines are described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

## Article 8.14.2.

**Safe commodities**

When authorising import or transit of the following *commodities* and any products made from them, *Veterinary Authorities* should not require any RVF related conditions, regardless of the RVF status of the ruminant population of the *exporting country*:

- 1) hides and skins;
- 2) wool and fibre.

## Article 8.14.3.

**Country or zone free from RVFV ~~infection~~**

A country or a *zone* may be considered free from RVFV ~~infection~~ when the ~~disease~~ infection with RVFV is notifiable in the ~~whole~~ entire country and either:

- 1) it meets the requirements for historical freedom in point 1 of Article 1.4.6.; or
- 2) met the following conditions:
  - a) an on-going pathogen-specific *surveillance* programme in accordance with Chapter 1.4. has demonstrated no evidence of ~~RVFV infection~~ with RVFV in ruminants in the country or *zone* for a minimum of ten years; and
  - b) during that period no indigenous human cases have occurred in the country or *zone*.

A country or *zone* free from ~~infection with~~ RVFV will not lose its free status through the importation of ruminants that are seropositive, so long as they are either permanently identified as such or destined for immediate *slaughter*.

## Article 8.14.4.

**Country or zone infected with RVFV during the inter-epizootic period**

A country or *zone* infected with RVFV, during the inter-epizootic period, is one in which virus activity is present at a low level but the factors predisposing to an epizootic are absent.

## Article 8.14.5.

**Country or zone infected with RVFV during an epizootic**

A country or *zone* infected with RVFV, during an epizootic, is one in which *outbreaks* of RVF are occurring at an incidence substantially exceeding that of the inter-epizootic period.

## Article 8.14.6.

**Strategies to protect from vector attacks during transport**

Strategies to protect *animals* from *vector* attacks during transport should take into account the local ecology of the *vectors* and potential *risk management* measures include:

- 1) treating *animals* with insect repellents prior to and during transportation;
- 2) *loading*, transporting and *unloading animals* at times of low *vector* activity;

- 3) ensuring *vehicles* do not stop en route during dawn or dusk, or overnight, unless the *animals* are held behind insect-proof netting;
- 4) using historical and current information to identify low risk ports and transport routes.

#### Article 8.14.7.

#### **Recommendations for importation from countries or zones free from RVFV infection**

##### For ruminants

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) were kept in a country or *zone* free from RVFV ~~infection~~ since birth or for at least 14 days prior to shipment;

AND

- 2) either:
  - a) were vaccinated at least 14 days prior to leaving the free country or *zone*; or
  - b) did not transit through an area experiencing an epizootic during transportation to the *place of shipment*; or
  - c) were protected from *vector* attacks when transiting through an area experiencing an epizootic.

#### Article 8.14.8.

#### **Recommendations for importation from countries or zones infected with RVFV during the inter-epizootic period**

##### For ruminants

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no sign of RVF on the day of shipment;
- 2) met one of the following conditions:
  - a) were vaccinated against RVF at least 14 days prior to shipment with a modified live virus vaccine; or
  - b) were held for at least 14 days prior to shipment in a ~~mosquito-proof~~ vector-protected *quarantine station*, which is located in an area of demonstrated low *vector* activity. During this period the *animals* showed no clinical sign of RVFV ~~infection~~;

AND

- 3) either:
  - a) did not transit through an area experiencing an epizootic during transportation to the *place of shipment*; or
  - b) were protected from *vector* attacks when transiting through an area experiencing an epizootic.

## Article 8.14.9.

**Recommendations for importation from countries or zones infected with RVFV during an epizootic**For ruminants

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the *animals*:

- 1) showed no sign of RVF on the day of shipment;
- 2) did not originate in the area of the epizootic;
- 3) were vaccinated against RVF at least 14 days prior to shipment;
- 4) were held for at least 14 days prior to shipment in a vector-protected quarantine station, which is located in an area of demonstrated low vector activity outside the area of the epizootic. During this period the *animals* showed no sign of RVF;
- 5) either:
  - a) did not transit through an area experiencing an epizootic during transportation to the *place of shipment*; or
  - b) were protected from vector attacks when transiting through an area experiencing an epizootic.

## Article 8.14.10.

**Recommendations for importation from countries or zones not free from ~~infection~~ with RVFV**For semen and *in vivo* derived embryos of ruminants

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the donor animals:

- 1) showed no sign of RVF within the period from 14 days prior to and 14 days following collection of the semen or embryos;

AND

- 2) either:
  - a) were vaccinated against RVF at least 14 days prior to collection; or
  - b) were demonstrated to be seropositive on the day of collection; or
  - c) testing of paired samples has demonstrated that seroconversion did not occur between semen or embryo collection and 14 days after.

## Article 8.14.11.

**Recommendations for importation of fresh meat and meat products from ruminants from countries or zones not free from ~~infection with~~ RVFV**

*Veterinary Authorities* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat* comes from:

- 1) ruminants which showed no clinical sign of RVF within 24 hours before *slaughter*;

- 2) ruminants which were slaughtered in an approved *slaughterhouse/abattoir* and were subjected to ante- and post-mortem inspections with favourable results;
- 3) carcasses which were submitted to maturation at a temperature above 2°C for a minimum period of 24 hours following *slaughter*.

Article 8.14.12.

**Recommendations for importation from countries or zones not free from ~~infection~~ with RVFV**

For milk and milk products

*Veterinary Authorities of importing countries* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the consignment:

- 1) was subjected to pasteurisation; or
- 2) was subjected to a combination of control measures with equivalent performance as described in the Codex Alimentarius Code of Hygienic Practice for Milk and Milk Products.

Article 8.14.13.

**Surveillance**

*Surveillance* should be carried out in accordance with Chapter 1.4.

- 1) During an epizootic, *surveillance* should be conducted to define the extent of the affected area.
- 2) During the inter-epizootic period, *surveillance* and monitoring of climatic factors predisposing an epizootic should be carried out in countries or *zones* infected with RVFV.
- 3) Countries or *zones* adjacent to a country or *zone* in which epizootics have been reported should determine their RVFV status through an on-going *surveillance* programme.

To determine areas of low *vector* activity (see Articles 8.14.8. and 8.14.9.) *surveillance* for arthropod *vectors* should be carried out in accordance with Chapter 1.5.

Examination of *vectors* for the presence of RVFV is an insensitive *surveillance* method and is therefore not recommended.

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